

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend is President of Operation Respect, a nationwide character education program that teaches right from wrong, personal and social responsibility. She has been appointed Adjunct Professor at Georgetown University's School of Public Policy.

Kathleen Kennedy Townsend has a long history of accomplishment in the public arena. As Maryland's first woman Lt. Governor, Kathleen Kennedy Townsend was in charge of a multimillion dollar budget and had oversight of major departments including State Police, Economic Development, Transportation, and the Office of Children Youth and Families. She is known nationally for her innovative and results oriented programs such as Hot Spots, Break the Cycle, the launching of the e-readiness initiative and the establishment of one of the first state wide offices of character education.

Before being elected Lt. Governor, Mrs. Townsend served as Deputy Assistant Attorney General of the United States. In that role, she led the planning to put 100,000 police officers into the community and she ignited the Police Corps, a program to give college scholarships to young people who pledge to work as police officers for four years after graduating.

Prior to serving at the Department of Justice, Mrs. Townsend spent seven years as the founder and director of the Maryland Student Service Alliance. It was in this role that she led the fight to make Maryland the first state in the nation to require all high school students perform community service. Before launching that initiative, Mrs. Townsend worked as an environmental attorney both in private practice and as an Assistant Attorney General in Maryland. In addition, in 1982 she managed Senator Edward M. Kennedy's successful re-election campaign.

Mrs. Townsend has taught foreign policy at the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. She has published articles in the New York Times, Washington Post, and Washington Monthly, among others. In the mid-eighties she founded the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award- and award whose recipients now include the Comadres of El Salvador, Adam Michnic of Poland, and Beyers Naude of South Africa.

Mrs. Townsend currently serves on the boards of directors of the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, Civic Works, the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation, and the Institute for Human Virology and the Character Education Partnership. She previously served on the boards of the Export-Import Bank, the Wilderness Society, and the Baltimore Urban League and was chair of the Robert Kennedy Memorial. An honors graduate of Harvard University, she received her law degree from the University of New Mexico where she was a member of the law review. She has received numerous honorary degrees.

The eldest child of Robert and Ethel Kennedy, Lt. Governor Townsend lives in Baltimore County with her husband, David, a professor at St. John's College in Annapolis. They have four daughters, Meaghan (25), Maeve (23), Kate (19), and Kerry (11).